

## **Bed Bug Fact Sheet**

According to statistics from the National Pest Management Association, bed bugs are on the rise in America, having increased 500 percent over the last three years.

### **Bed Bugs: What Are They?**

- Nocturnal, Blood-feeding insects
- Light-tan in color, turning dark-red or brown after feeding. About 1/4 inch long, flattened before feeding and swollen afterward
- Easy to see with the naked eye, but difficult to find while hiding
- Feed once a week on a sleeper's exposed skin for several minutes at a time
- Bites are painless and not felt by most people, but could leave a hard bump with a whitish center that can itch for many days
- Parasites, but there is NO evidence they spread disease like other parasites
- Able to survive up to 10 months between blood meals if necessary
- Attracted to carbon dioxide and body heat
- Able to lay up to 500 eggs in one lifetime
- Able to repopulate themselves and re-infest a room in just three to four months
- Extremely mobile, can hide just about anywhere and be carried in anything
- Create a sickly, sweet smell in an infested room
- Can hide almost anywhere, including in upholstered furniture, nightstands, headboards, bedding, lamps, picture frames and luggage
- May also be found in unexpected places, like the telephone, behind electrical switch plates, under carpet edges or carpeting, light fixtures, housekeeping carts and folds of draperies or curtains.
- Documented in some of man's earliest recorded history
- Mostly eradicated in U.S. prior to WWII but have made a come back due to global travel and restrictions on pesticide use
- **MYTH** – "Bed Bugs have something to do with hygiene or poverty". Bed Bugs are found in multimillion dollar homes, luxury hotels and in an estimated 25 percent of college campuses and are easily transported.

### **Prevention, Education and Detection are best ways to avoid infestation**

- Do NOT accept used clothing or bedding, and inspect any items that you do accept for signs of bed bug activity
- Educate those around you about the myths, facts and signs of Bed Bugs.
- At the earliest sign of a problem notify a pest control expert

When traveling, inspect rooms for bed bug activity by checking:

- Linens, mattress and box spring seams, headboards, Bedding
- When returning from a trip, check your luggage and clothing.
- Vacuum suitcases after returning from a vacation.

**When traveling, checking your home or inspecting merchandise you should be looking not only for live insects, but also for cast skins or speckles of dried blood or excrement. Make sure to look in places where bed bugs hide (behind headboards, in cracks, behind photos, mattress seams, etc).**